ELL Reader

Social Studies

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School Days in Japan

by Linda Yoshizawa



Genre	Build Background	Access Content	Extend Language
Nonfiction	• Cultures • Education • School Clothes and Customs	• Definitions • Labels and Captions • Schedule	• Multiple-Meaning Word

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 Japanese children in school



Students in Japan go to school just like you do. In Japan, school is very important. Japanese children and their teachers spend 240 days a year in school. They even go to school every other Saturday!

The school year starts in April. It begins with a special ceremony. The school year ends the next March. There is a festival to end the school year, too.

When do you go to school?

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ceremony: a special set of actions for an important occasion

 





Each school decides what the students should wear. Some Japanese students wear uniforms. Others wear everyday clothes.

Many students wear bright yellow hats as they walk to and from school. Yellow hats make it easy for drivers to see the children. The hats prevent accidents.

What do you wear to school?






These children are learning to write Japanese characters.


Japanese students study many different subjects. Their teachers teach them math, reading, science, and social studies. They also learn to use computers.

Japanese children learn to speak English. They also learn how to write Japanese characters.

What do your teachers teach you?

characters: written marks that stand for words

School Schedule	
8:15 A.M.	Doors open
8:50 A.M.	Morning classes begin
12:20 P.M.	Lunch
1:05 P.M.	Clean-up time
1:25 P.M.	Recess
1:45 P.M.	Afternoon classes begin
2:30 P.M.	Break
2:45 P.M.	Clubs and activities
3:45 P.M.	School ends


This schedule shows what days are like in many Japanese schools.

Does this schedule look like the schedule in your school? How is it similar? How is it different?








Japanese students have recess and lunch, just like Americans. They have breaks between classes, too.

The students also help clean the school. They learn to work hard and to help out.

Do you do any chores to help out at your school?





In Japanese schools, students do many activities. They go on field trips. They learn about melody and rhythm in music class.

School club meetings are part of the schedule. Everyone belongs to some kind of club. There are clubs for students who want to learn more about computers. There are science clubs and sports clubs.

What kinds of activities or clubs does your school have?

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field trips: trips outside the school for special learning purposes









In Japanese schools, teachers keep children busy. The children learn many things, and they work very hard.

Japanese children have time to play together in school, too. They enjoy spending time with their friends, especially during lunch and at recess.

What do you like best about going to school?





Talk About It

1. What would you like best about going to school in Japan?
2. What would you like least?

Write About It

3. On a separate sheet of paper, write a note to someone in your family. Tell how going to school in Japan is similar to going to school in the United States.

Extend Language

Some words have more than one meaning. **Character** can mean a person in a story. A **character** in Japanese writing is a written mark. What do we call the written characters in the English language, such as *a*, *b*, and *c*?

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